



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 11, 2007

For Information Contact Public Affairs
WYN HORNBuckle
Telephone: (602) 514-7625
Cell: (602) 525-2681

PREVIOUSLY DEPORTED ILLEGAL ALIEN AND VIOLENT FELON SENTENCED TO 40 MONTHS IN FEDERAL PRISON.

TUCSON, Ariz. – Diego Alonso Romero-Garcia, 27, of Sonora, Mexico, was sentenced here on May 10, 2007, to serve 40 months in federal prison by U.S. District Judge Cindy K. Jorgenson. Romero-Garcia had pleaded guilty on January 18, 2007, to the charges of Illegal Re-entry After Deportation and Felon in Possession of a Firearm.

On July 5, 2006, Arizona Department of Public Safety Officers made a traffic stop on a vehicle. Romero-Garcia was the driver of that vehicle, although he initially lied about his name and date of birth. When the officer determined that the driver was providing false information, he attempted to place him under arrest. Romero-Garcia broke free from the officer, fled on foot through traffic, and ran into the desert. A helicopter was necessary to locate Romero-Garcia, who was eventually discovered lying under a tree. A search of the vehicle uncovered a Colt Gold Cup National Match semi-automatic .38 caliber handgun, along with a high-capacity (20-round) magazine containing bullets, and a box of 45 additional rounds of .38 super caliber ammunition. Romero-Garcia admitted that the gun was his. Records checks revealed that Romero-Garcia is a citizen of Mexico illegally in the United States. He was convicted of a violent crime (aggravated assault with a deadly weapon / dangerous instrument) in 1999 and was deported to Mexico in 2000.

Romero-Garcia's prosecution is part of the District of Arizona's Project Safe Neighborhoods, an illegal firearms enforcement program. The effectiveness of Project Safe Neighborhoods in Arizona is based on the ability of federal, state, and local agencies to cooperate in a unified offensive that is led by the U.S. Attorney. Through ongoing partnerships among federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies, like the one in this case, the U.S. Attorney is implementing a series of strategies that are contoured to fit the specific gun crime problems throughout Arizona.

The investigation in this case was jointly conducted by the Arizona Department of Public Safety, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The prosecution was handled by Jennifer J. Maldonado, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: CR-06-01383-TUC-CKJ
RELEASE NUMBER: 2007-127(Romero-Garcia)

###